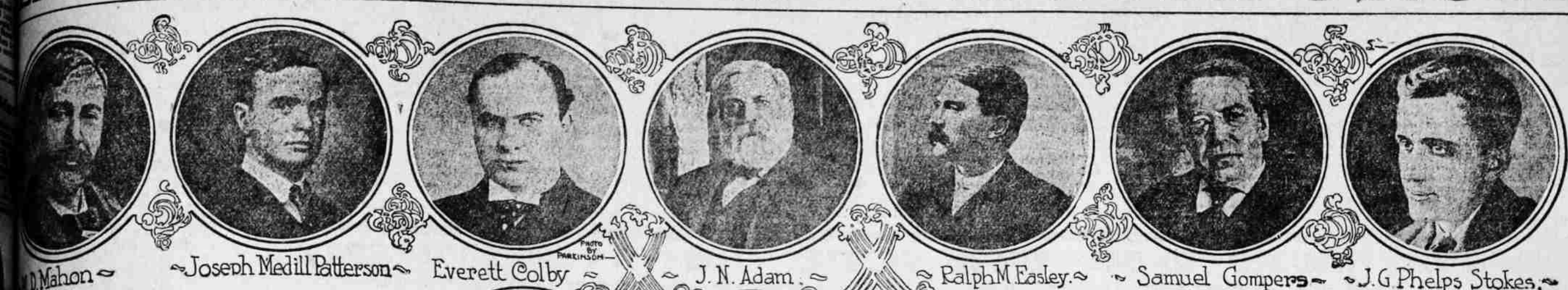


LABOR IN POLITICS A SYMPOSIUM



ROOSEVELT ON UNION LABOR

There is trade unionism, wisely and justly handled, in which the workers benefit those connected with them is not accompanied by any injustice or wrong to others. I believe in the duty of capitalists to seek one another out, to understand each other, and to endeavor to show broad and kindly human sympathy to the other.

WHAT SHOULD LABOR DO IN POLITICS?

It is brought home to the American people this Labor day that the labor movement in this country organized labor has gone to a comprehensive scale.

The leaders of the labor union have sedulously avoided even the suggestion of themselves or their organizations with political parties. They have taken a complete about-face attitude. Trade unionism is an extraordinary experiment of seeking to have none except labor's own guard in the halls of Congress and in the Legislatures of the States.

It will be no one knows. Even the labor union leaders do not appear to be entirely clear as to just how far organized labor in politics. Their ideas appear to be centered on retiring the workingmen those whom they regard as labor's enemies and of the labor union's avowed friends. The future, they declare, is their own.

Members of both the old parties are watching labor's new moves and are fearful for the outcome. Invariably they run to the invitation to discuss the union's invasion of the field of politics. They also to some in the public eye who have not been in the "practical" politicians.

Republicans and Democrats, however, among whom are Representative Sherman of New York, chairman of the Republican Congressional committee, and Everett Colby, State Senator in New Jersey, declare the workingman's vote should be cast with the party. Mayor Adam, Buffalo's rugged Democratic Mayor, as he is not to be blamed if it protects itself in politics, but in public life who is a better friend to a class than to the other.

What should labor do in politics? are herewith what they highly interesting reading for Labor day.

BY J. G. PHELPS STOKES

ment are guided by the fact that principles are of primary consideration; office, second.

All observers agree that the campaign of our fellow workers of Great Britain has had a wholesome effect upon the Government, as well as the interests of the workingman, and the people generally of that country. In the last British elections, fifty-four trade union members were elected to Parliament. If the British workingmen, with their limited franchise, accomplished so much by their united action, what may we in the United States do to do with universal suffrage?

The toilers of America, by asserting their rights and electing honest men to Congress and to other legislative bodies, will more completely and more fully carry out their obligations as union men and more than ever merit the respect of their fellow-citizens.

BY WILLIAM D. MAHON

President Association of Street Railway Employees.

What should labor do in politics? Just this: Divorce the people from the old political parties and destroy the blind following of political machines. The very keynote of the labor movement has always been to prevent the unions from trying up to any party. As I understand it, the present movement of labor is not to form a political party, but to determine to this sentiment is gaining ground with great rapidity everywhere and is not confined to the toilers. The tide is rising so fast against the "boss" and all his works that it would be unnatural if labor did not lend its great force and influence to the universal movement for a different order of things.

In its present campaign I would have labor get control of the machinery of the old party wherever possible, and where this cannot be done, nominate independently. To defeat a man now in office who has been an enemy of labor, I would elect "a stick." If necessary, I would elect a man who should be humiliated as much as possible.

It is charged that labor is seeking to build up class legislation. What we are really trying to do is to break down class legislation, from which the country has already too long been suffering.

BY JAMES J. MURPHY

President of Typographical Union No. 6.

Speaking merely as an individual and not in any sense as representing my organization, it has always been my belief that every trade unionist should be affiliated with a political movement and the other character. While in England and some other countries the unions have gone into political movements as unions, it remains to be seen whether such a course will be proved a wise one for the labor organizations in this country to follow. Nevertheless, the fact that the present programme of seeking election to Congress and the various State Legislatures of men favorable to labor has been entered upon by such able and tried leaders as Samuel Gompers and the other heads of the American Federation of Labor, makes the new movement one which should receive the careful consideration of every trade unionist in the United States.

Notwithstanding all the carping criticism directed against the trade unions, there is no question whatever that the existing great prosperity of the country has been very materially augmented by the last decade labor has been most active in securing legislation favorable not only to the members of the unions themselves, but also to non-unionists and the people generally. Even the most unskilled classes of labor, those which from the very fact that they are so

unskilled do not easily lend themselves to organization and are not yet fully able to appreciate the value of cohesion through the union movement, have been vastly benefited by the laws which have already been passed in labor's interests, while at the same time the whole labor movement has been strengthened and the whole mass of citizenship the country over is far better off.

In spite of all that has been done, however, much more remains to be accomplished. Many of the reforms which the trade unionist interests are now insisting upon are bitterly opposed by the law-making powers, and it is obvious that labor's friends will have to be put on guard all along the line before many of these proposed reforms can be won.

One of the most important reforms now being sought by the trade unionist, in my opinion, is the stopping of the abuse of the injunctions. These have been used against labor in a very determined and, in many cases, very unjust manner. I do not mean to say that the unionist absolutely disapproves of the exercise of the injunctive power by the courts, but he does insist that the power be modified in some way so that he shall not be arbitrarily deprived of his rights.

Probably the greatest barrier to the passage of important laws sought by labor interests today is to be found in the United States Senate, and the present method of electing members of that body. Under the existing system of choosing Senators by Legislatures, it hardly seems possible that labor men or men friendly to labor can be elected to the Senate. When United States Senators are elected directly by the people labor will meet with much less opposition in securing the enactment of legislation favorable to its interests.

This, I believe, will all come in due time. For the present the plan of the American Federation of Labor to confine its efforts to securing the election of approved candidates to Congress and the State Legislatures, is an ample programme, and, if even moderately successful, ought to prove a formidable entering wedge for labor in the politics of the future.

BY UPTON SINCLAIR

Socialist Candidate for Congress and Author of "The Jungle."

The American Nation is at present facing the greatest crisis in its history. Corruption, which has been feeding upon the body politic for a generation, is now admitted to be threatening its very life. Our public spirited and thinking men, who for decades have been wrestling with this corruption, have failed universally.

They have failed because they did not appeal to labor; because labor was asleep. And now at last labor is beginning to wake up. The workingman is beginning to realize the part which he plays in the political game. It is his business, it is his right, to elect the men who are to govern him. He sells to the political boss, perhaps for a dollar or two, perhaps just for a kind word and a little buncombe. So the political boss gets the offices; and then he sells the privileges of government to the capitalist, who uses his advantage to squeeze more money out of the workingman.

There is a natural and obvious limitation to the continuance of that process. It can go on until the capitalist begins to have so much money that the workingman has none at all; and then the workingman goes into politics.

I do not talk buncombe when I talk to workingmen. I do not tell them about the importance of delivering the American Republic. The present day conditions are such that the workingman must keep the workingman's nose on the grindstone, and he has no time to think about anything but making a living and keeping his family alive. And so when I talk to workingmen I show them how they are being robbed, and ask them how much longer they propose to stand it. It is time enough to think of ideals when a man has got enough to eat.

All thinking men among our capitalists are agreed that we are on the verge of hard times such as the country has not yet known. When those times come several millions of men will be out of work. The unions will fall like houses of cards. The workingman will be out on the streets. I tell him about it in advance, because I know that if it catches him sud-

Right Reverend Henry C. Potter

denly he may take to bricks and clubs, which is a wasteful process, while if he has time to think about it he will be organized and ready to go into politics.

It is the same all over the world, the same story of corruption and oppression, and of a new hope of justice and right conditions, depending solely upon the working class to force them. At the present moment all are forced to recognize that the organized, revolutionary proletariat of Russia is the only power capable of making headway against the bureaucracy. In Germany, it is the working class socialist party which holds the Emperor in check, and prevents him from crushing the Russia struggle for freedom. Great Britain stands upon the threshold of an area of long needed domestic reform, and the time has come simply because her public men realize that the working class is prepared to force it. The same time must come soon in this country.

BY RALPH M. EASLEY

Secretary of the National Civic Federation.

While there exists some confusion, even in the ranks of labor itself, as to the exact significance of the political programme of the American Federation of Labor, it can safely be said that, with certain exceptions, the general policy of the Federation does not mean the formation of an independent political party at this time. On the contrary, its policy has much in common with that of the Municipal Voters' league in Chicago, which resulted in changing a notoriously bad City Council to a fairly representative and decent body.

The league in that instance found it necessary to secure the nomination of independent candidates in only a few cases. One clause in the "campaign programme" is: "Where a Congressman or State legislator has proven himself a true friend to the right of labor he should be supported and re-elected. This was the policy of the Chicago Voters' league."

Organized labor can secure through either of the dominant parties, or in any other way, the balance of power in Congress or in legislative bodies, it will undoubtedly wield a great influence in favor of its measures. It is as legitimate for labor to organize to promote its interests through politics as it is for organizations of employers or other groups of interests to work for their own advantage.

BY EVERETT COLBY

Republican Senator in New Jersey and Reformer.

I don't think it ought to be necessary for the laboring man to get in politics. He should be in politics now. In New Jersey we have come to the conclusion that the best way to put in effect any legislation the people may desire is to go to the party primary and vote for delegates to the conven-

tion who are pledged to support definite candidates, who in turn are pledged to specific and definite principles of law.

To my mind it does little "good for the voter of one party to go over to the other party, because both are controlled by the same influences and prevent so far as possible the enactment of laws in the interest of the people. To join an independent movement would do no lasting good. I feel, therefore, if the laborer goes into his own party primary, whether it be Democratic or Republican, he can accomplish more than by changing parties or joining some independent faction.

We advocate in New Jersey the direct primary which gives the party voter a freer opportunity of expressing his opinion as to the character of public men and public business.

BY J. G. PHELPS STOKES

Socialist and Millionaire.

I am asked to express my views as to what labor should do in politics. I assume the term labor, as here used, can with propriety be held to denote those who produce at least as much wealth as is required for their own maintenance. It is evident that a large portion of those among our population who are capable of producing as much wealth as they require, produce, as a matter of fact far less, a very large number producing none at all. It is equally evident that any one who consumes more wealth than he produces is taking of the product of the labor of others (unless perhaps in such favored regions as supply man's requirements without effort on the part of any one).

There is a vast group of men are compelled by circumstances beyond their control to produce much more than they and their families require, as is the case at present, in order that hundreds of thousands of others may live in partial or complete idleness or excessive luxury, a wrong exists which should require wide public attention, and one which, if labor possesses or was capable of possessing the few tools necessary to the production of marketable commodities, and had access to such lands as he needed, he was free industrially and his own master. He could produce as much or as little as he chose, could work for whatever hours he chose, and cease from labor as often as he chose, knowing that he could resume at will, the tools being his.

The wide introduction of labor-saving machinery changed all this. The average individual workman, whether he had access to land or not, could no longer produce independently in competition with the machine. Tools of the kind now used in the production of the great majority of material wealth became too costly for him to own. The modern tool is the machine, or the power drill or the steam engine, or the expensive farm machinery that the average farmer has to mortgage his farm to buy. The modern workman is obliged to depend upon the owner of the machine or upon the money lender if he is to compete in the public markets. If he would work at all and support life, he must accept whatever conditions are imposed upon him by them. As a rule he cannot engage in self-supporting labor without the consent of those whose capital, honestly or dishonestly won, enables them to own the machines and the land; and he can secure this consent only on condition that he will produce for them as well as for himself and family. The average wage-earner today is thus in a condition of partial slavery. The opportunities of the public markets, labor and the pursuit of happiness are controlled absolutely and arbitrarily by others.

Only in proportion as labor makes its just demands effective by co-operation is its condition improved. Such co-

operation is now needed in the political field as much as in any other. The basic fact which labor must face is that it is denied access to land and to the machinery of production, unless it will produce sufficient not merely for its own support but for the maintenance also of the vast array of those who live in complete or partial idleness upon the surplus product of its toil.

I think no right minded man would say that the right to use the machine should be wholly free, for it has been produced by others, and its use is limited, and he who produces or provides it for another's use should receive compensation from the user. But beyond and above all rightful compensation to those who contribute in any way to the product, an enormous surplus of wealth goes today to those who contribute in no way whatsoever, and of this fact wider notice should be taken.

I am not of those who would exclude all employers from the category of the world's productive laborers. All grades of the most active and of idleness can be found among both employers and employed. Every individual or organization having paid agents is an employer. The trade unionists and Socialists, whether as individuals or acting through their organizations, are no exception. The man who wins the case of employer and employed work together justly in the promotion of common interests. In a sense, any exchange of service for produce, if upon terms previously arranged, is employment, and freedom to make such exchange is clearly desirable.

The line in the class struggle is more correctly drawn between those who consume more wealth than they are willing to produce, and those who, if they would like, are compelled to produce more than they require. Labor and the term is here used, constitutes the latter class. It should clearly recognize the fact of its exploitation by others for the satisfaction of private greed, and should struggle politically to secure such public machinery of production as will insure to all men access to both without being under the necessity of producing a surplus product for the maintenance of exploiters.

Capital as a class takes care to protect itself in politics. The class is to be blamed if it takes care to protect itself in politics. But capital and labor, either or both, are to blame and to be condemned if they should resort to tactics that are dishonorable or methods that are dishonest. The man who wins the long run is the man who plays the clean, straight game. Theodore Roosevelt and William J. Bryan are notable examples of this truth.

The two most potent influences in the business world are capital and labor. One of the most potent influences in politics in the past has been capital. Naturally labor seeks in politics the same position it holds in the business world. But neither capital nor labor should lose sight of the fact that politics, business, capital, labor and all else is designed simply to serve the best ends of man and achieve the greatest good for the most people. I have no patience with the statement that labor should not have its particular friends in public life. But no man in public life or in politics has any right to be a better friend to a class than to the mass. It is wrong to stand for the devices of a part of the people against the interests of the people as a whole. I believe labor and by labor I mean the workingmen of the country, should do its best to get the best of its number into public life, and that these men in turn should serve their fellow workingmen most by standing steadfast for what is right whether it is indorsed by labor or capital or by every one or by no one at all.

What Some Leading Trades Have Gained in New York City During Twenty Years.

TRADE.	Rate of Wages Per Day.	P.C. of Inc.	1886.	1906.	Weekly Hours of Labor.	P.C. of Inc.
Job printers	\$3.00	\$3.50	166	55	48	186
Bricklayers	4.05	5.00	382	53	44	149
Granite cutters	3.20	4.50	285	53	44	163
Plasterers	4.00	5.50	275	53	44	169
Plumbers	3.50	4.75	367	53	44	169
Marble cutters	3.00	5.00	668	53	44	169
Carpenters	3.50	4.80	371	53	44	169
Ship carpenters	3.25	3.80	677	54	48	111
Hod hoisting engineers	2.50	5.00	423	53	44	189
Tile layers	3.50	5.00	423	53	44	254

This table is compiled from statistics furnished by the New York State Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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BY JAMES NOBLE ADAM

Democrat and Mayor of Buffalo.

Labor should do in politics precisely what every other body of citizens should do in politics—it should do its utmost to see the best men nominated and to see the best men elected, and to see that those who are elected do their best after being elected. It should do this fairly, squarely and fearlessly, without flinching or being bulldozed, without bribery, without tramping on the rights of others, and without having its own rights trampled on.

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JOSEPH MEDILL PATTERSON

Socialist, Former Editor of the Chicago Tribune and Recently Public Works Commissioner of Chicago.

Mr. Workingman, isn't it a fact that whoever first said "the interests of capital and of labor are identical" was a liar? Don't you know from your own experience a good many times when your interests were not identical with those of your employer?

Again, the poorer and more helpless you are, the richer and more powerful he

is. You can be sure of this by comparing the condition of the workers in unorganized industries with the condition of the workers in organized industries. This shows that your interests, instead of being the same, are opposed, doesn't it?

To maintain his power over you the capitalist does not depend, as you do, simply and purely upon industrial organization. He goes into politics. He puts men into the Senate, the House of Representatives, the State Legislature, the gubernatorial chairs and the State and Federal benches. You will have noticed perhaps that he is particularly careful about choosing his men for Judges.

Now don't you think that you ought to go into politics too? Merely in self defense, if nothing more. Would it not be easier for you if you had a few men in the Senate, in the gubernatorial chairs and on the bench who saw things from your angle?

When you conclude to go into politics (as you will have to some day), you will probably see that the wisest thing for you to do is to join the socialist party, which is the only workingmen's party in the world of any consequence. The chief enunciator of scientific socialism was Karl Marx. Non-socialist university professors, now openly concede that with the possible exception of Charles Darwin, Marx was the greatest scientific intellect of the nineteenth century. Marx and Darwin taught the same thing—namely the theory of evolution.

The master statesman in Germany, August Bebel, is a Socialist. The greatest orator in France, Jaures, is a Socialist. The acutest mind in the Belgian Chamber of Deputies belongs to Vandervelde, a Socialist. The Socialist vote started in 1871 with 101,000 all over the world. It has been steadily increasing until this year it is 5,000,000. The rate of increase for the last dozen years has been about half a million a year.

You may say you do not care to wait until the Socialists gain complete power. You want immediate relief. Then elect a Socialist or two to the Legislature, to Congress. You will find he works and votes most effectively for every single measure of relief for labor. Put a Socialist on the bench. You will find he is not called an injunction judge—unless by the other side.

The motto of the Socialist party will interest you. It is: "Workers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains and a world to gain."

BY JAMES S. SHERMAN

Chairman of Republican Congressional Campaign Committee.

Most decidedly should the laboring man take an interest in politics and legislation, for it is because of the laws affecting labor enacted during the last half century that our working classes have reached a standard of living and an enjoyment of the good things of life unknown to a larger part of the laborers in other countries.

Owing to our opportunities and advantages the laboring man of today becomes the employer and capitalist of tomorrow. Many a landowner of today was a farmhand a few years ago. Nearly all our prominent iron and steel men began in the mill, and most of our textile officials once worked at the loom. Such conditions and such advances are not due to chance, but are made possible by legislation, and, I may add, Republican legislation.

Our Republican tariff laws, from the Morrill law of 1861 to the Dingley law of today, have given to our laboring classes work and then high wages for that work, because we make the duty on foreign wares cover the difference in labor cost. That is what protection means—high wages—protection against cheap foreign labor.

BY HENRY C. POTTER

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Diocese of New York.

You will make an opportune use of Labor day, in the interests of labor unions especially, if you will urge upon the attention of the unions in their public expressions some intimation: First—Of their disapproval of acts of violence designed to vindicate the rights of labor; and

Second—Of their sympathy with those essential principles of individual freedom on which the Republic rests. It is these which many people believe labor unions menace and invade; and it is greatly to be desired that those who represent the unions and speak for them should make plain that the unions stand for the principle of individual freedom in regard to all questions of work and pay.

In a word, the principles of labor unions, with which a great many of us are in hearty sympathy, will receive their best reinforcement by a line of action on the part of the unions themselves which is recognized as in defense of the individual liberty of the citizen.

NOTABLE GAINS OF LABOR IN TWENTY YEARS

Labor Day of 1906—the twentieth since the day became a legal holiday, the twenty-fifth since its first actual observance—finds the workers of America vastly better off in many respects than they have ever been in history.

According to many labor leaders and economists, workers today are better paid by from ten to forty per cent, and in some cases almost as high as seventy per cent, than two decades ago. Their hours are shorter, and it is asserted they are better fed, better clothed and better housed; that their children are better educated; that their environment is happier, and that they have more leisure to enjoy the benefits of all the refining influences of life. Twenty years ago there were few labor laws. Now there are many in almost every State. In 1886 the entire body of law in New York State in the interest of wage earners consisted of less than half a dozen statutes, mostly unimportant. Today there are scores of important laws providing protection and safeguards for labor of every sort.

In the infancy of Labor day workers were poorly organized. Today upwards of two million of toilers are on the rolls of trade unions.

Reports of the State labor bureaus show that capital and labor in many important industries are working in closer harmony and that trade agreements have in numerous instances supplanted the strike and lock-out methods of settling industrial disputes. Some close observers, among whom was the late Senator Hanna, have within a few years predicted that the era of strikes is nearing its end.

Public opinion twenty years ago was almost hostile to labor. Now it is largely enlisted on the worker's side and, with the employer and the employee himself, is active in providing many betterments for the masses of toilers.